## EXPRESS MAIL NO.: EL750740763US

Docket No. 00-059-DSK

## CLAIMS:

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What is claimed is:

A virtual stored data management subsystem, the virtual stored data management subsystem comprising: one or more hosts; and

a plurality of virtual data units functionally

5 coupled to the one or more hosts, wherein the plurality

6 of virtual data units includes associated management

7 information such that the management information provides

8 first and second boundaries such that the first and

9 second boundaries limit preferences in which to store the

10 virtual data\units within the stored data management

11 subsystem.

1 2. The virtua stored data management subsystem of

2 claim 1, wherein the management information is

3 independent of attributes of the virtual stored data

4 management subsystem.

1 3. The virtual stored data management subsystem of

2 claim 2, wherein the management information conforms to

3 installation criteria within the virtual stored data

4 management system.

1 4. The virtual stored data management subsystem of

2 claim 1, wherein the management information is related to

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attributes of the virtual stored data management subsystem utilizing a plurality of rules.

- 1 5. The virtual stored data management subsystem of
- 2 claim 4, wherein the plurality of rules are variable.
- 1 6. The virtual stored data management subsystem of
- 2 claim 5, wherein the variable rules are an algorithm.
- 1 7. The virtual stored management subsystem of claim 1,
- wherein the management information is processed in
- 3 accordance with storage element attributes and further
- 4 comprises:
- 5 deriving relationships that define the first and
- 6 second boundaries;\ and
- 7 stipulating the first and second boundaries, wherein
- 8 stipulated first and\second boundaries includes stated
- 9 relationships from derived relationships.
- 1 8. The virtual stored management subsystem of claim 7,
- 2 wherein the relationships exist only on demand.
- 1 9. The virtual stored management subsystem of claim 7,
- 2 wherein the relationships are \a combination of storage
- 3 subsystem relationships.

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The virtual stored management subsystem of claim 9, wherein the combination of storage subsystem

- relationships includes a redundant array of inexpensive
- disks (RAID) and a hierarchical storage management (HSM). 4